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State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Commissioners on Inland Fisheries

MADE TO THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND,

AT ITS

January Session, A. D. 1877.

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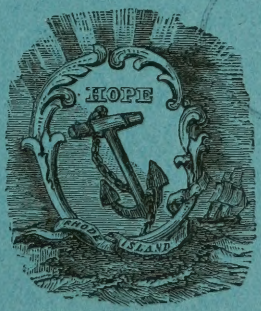

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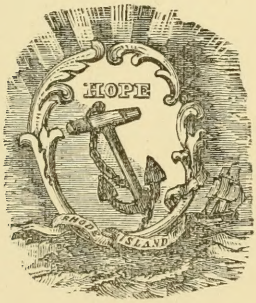

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REPORT.

To the Honorable General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island, at its January Session, 1877 :

The Commissioners of Inland Fisheries beg leave to submit their seventh annual report :

The State hatching house and its appurtenances are in excellent condition. We received the past year from Mr. C. S. Atkins 20,000 land-locked or Schoodic salmon ova. These were hatched and distributed as follows, with a loss of only about 2 per cent.:

Wallum Pond	in Burrillville.
Moswansicut Pond	in Scituate.
Steers Pond	in Scituate.
Searles Pond	in Foster.
Lilly Pond	in Foster.
Gorton's Pond	in Warwick.
Warwick Pond	in Warwick.
Beach Pond	in Richmond.

The following ponds have been stocked with black bass by the present commissioners, which we append in this order for convenience of reference :

JUNE AND JULY, 1870.

Wauchog Pond	in Charlestown.
Moswansicut Pond	in Scituate.
Sneach Pond	in Cumberland.
Herring Pond	in Burrillville.

JUNE AND JULY, 1871.

Steere's Pond	in Scituate.
Hope Pond	in Scituate.
Ponegansett Pond	in Scituate.
Searle's Pond	in Foster.
Spear's Pond	in Foster.
Scott's Pond	in Lincoln.
New Reservoir	in Lonsdale.
Warwick Pond	in Warwick.
Gorton Pond	in Warwick.

JUNE AND JULY, 1872.

Stafford Pond	in Tiverton.
Easton's Pond	in Newport and Middletown.

JUNE AND JULY, 1873.

Yawgoo Pond	in South Kingstown.
Worden's Pond	in South Kingstown.
Bellville Pond	in North Kingstown.
Johnson's Pond	in Coventry.
Wickaboxet Pond	in West Greenwich.
Deep Pond	in Exeter.
Yawgook Pond	in Hopkinton.
Eaton's Pond	in Newport.
Two Ponds	on Block Island.

JUNE AND JULY, 1874.

Blue Pond	in Hopkinton

We also received 120,000 salmon ova which were hatched with about a like success, and placed in the following-named streams: 20,000 in Wood and Pawcatuck rivers, 15,000 in the Slatersville Branch of the Blackstone, and 80,000 in the Pawtuxet and its branches.

In October last, we received a letter from Prof. Baird, the United States Commissioner, asking us how many California eggs we would take; but the extreme drought of the past summer made us unable to

avail ourselves of his kindness. Under the present circumstances, we believe we have in the past five years, done all that is necessary to demonstrate if our streams are capable of supporting salmon. Of course the very numerous dams will forever bar the return of these fish to the upper parts of the streams, where they pass the first year, and some authorities say, two of their lives. Once over the dams, there is no return for them. Their instinct at a certain age prompting them to seek the sea. Now all we can demonstrate is, will our streams support these fish in their young state till that age is reached. That they once did is certain, but the quality and temperature of the water has undergone such a change, that he would be a bold fish commissioner, who would make a positive statement. We are encouraged to hope they will, for very many of these young salmon have been taken, by various modes of capture, in different stages of growth. But it is difficult to study what is going on under the water, and so we at present are more or less in the dark. Five years ago a great hue and cry was raised for fishways over the dams in all the New England States; many thousands of dollars have been spent on them, and with our present light we cannot but congratulate the people of Rhode Island on holding aloof up to date.

BLACK BASS.

We are happy to be able to reiterate all we have said in our past reports as to our success in making this capital fish a native of our waters. The bass have become very popular and are destined to become more so, as our people learn better how to take them.

The past season we have only placed them in one locality namely, the Stillwater Reservoir in Smithfield. Private parties have however stocked numerous ponds with fish taken from the waters previously stocked by the State. A good many have been taken from the Blackstone River the past year which no doubt found their way there from Whitinsville. The reservoir at that place having given away some five years ago. To show the rapidity of the increase of these fish; five years since in October, 8 bass were put into Steer's pond in Rockland, of about 8 acres in area, and

about 13 feet in average depth. Last year the pond was drawn down to repair the dam, and a number of bass were taken, from 3 to 4 pounds in weight, and small ones innumer ble. Quite a number we hear have been taken through the ice the past winter, by parties fishing for pickerel, some of upwards of 4 pounds in weight-

Bass make a round nest in the gravel near the shore in from 3 to 5 feet of water, and deposit their eggs about June 1st, or a little later ; as near as can be ascertained about two weeks are required to hatch the eggs, and as soon as the sack is absorbed the little ones retire to the grass and weeds along the shore for safety. The old fish during the time the eggs and young are in the nest, are watching near by, and driving off all intruders, The young seem to grow very rapidly.

SHAD.

Owing to the extreme heat of the past season we were unable to get our usual supply of young shad. The source of supply is the Connecticut river, where the United States Commissioner now has charge of the works. The labor there was rendered almost naught the past summer by the over heating of the water, and we, as well as the other New England States suffered in consequence. We hope the coming season to do better, for our past success with shad has been very great, and these fish have been more abundant and cheaper in our State for the past two years than for a great length of time, and a good portion of our supply was taken in our own immediate waters. All the expense necessary to obtain the young fish, is for transportation, they being furnished free.

TROUT.

We have done nothing with trout for the past two years owing to the extreme droughts we are occasionally subjected to, our supply of water sometimes gives out, and then in a very short time our labors and outlay are vain. We do not recommend any one attempting to raise these fish on a large scale unless sure of an unfailing supply of water.

IN CONCLUSION.

We would say as our report briefly shows that the past year has

not been an active one in our department for the reason that we having accomplished what was needful in the few previous years in stocking the waters of the State, must now lay upon our oars and watch the success of our labors. We think we do not claim too much in saying that with black bass it has been entire and fully equal to our most sanguine expectations (and fish commissioners are always sanguine.) Shad have increased in our waters vastly within the past three years, and as for salmon. we hope, and can say no more, and we would only add that our sincere wish is that the same unanimity of wise and generous action would prevail in our councils and community, in regard to our Bay fisheries, as have been granted to us in our efforts to improve those of our inland waters.

Aware that we are now upon dangerous grounds and that the pursuance of the topic will doubtless bring us a strong hint to stick to our legitimate business, we close our report with a statement of our cash account, and would say that no appropriation is needed for the coming year.

The following is a list of the commissioners of the various states.

COMMISSIONERS OF FISHERIES.

UNITED STATES.

Prof. Spencer F. Baird..... Washington, D. C.

ARKANSAS.

N. H. Fish..... Pine Buffs
J. R. Steelman..... Little Rock
N. B. Pearce..... Fayetville

CALIFORNIA.

B. B. Redding..... Sacramento
S. R. Throckmorton..... San Francisco
J. F. Farwell..... San Francisco

CONNECTICUT.

William M. Hudson..... Hartford
Robert G. Pike..... Middletown
James A. Bill..... Lyme

GEORGIA.

Thomas P. James.....
(Duties embracing the work of the fish interest assigned to Commissioner of Agriculture).

IOWA.

Samuel B. Evans.....	Ottumwa
B. F. Shaw.....	Anamora
Charles A. Haynes.....	Waterloo

KENTUCKY.

Pack Thomas.....	Louisville.

MAINE.

E. M. Stillwell.....	Bangor.
Henry O. Stanfield.....	Dixfield.

MARYLAND.

T. B. Ferguson.....	Baltimore.
T. W. Downes.....	Denton.

MASSACHUSETTS.

Theodore Lyman.....	Brookline.
Asa French.....	South Braintree.
E. A. Brackett.....	Winchester

MICHIGAN.

George Clark.....	Ecorse.
A. J. Kellogg.....	Allegan.
E. R. Miller.....	Richland.

MINNESOTA.

R. O. Sweeney.....	St. Paul.
Robert Owesly.....	.....
William Golcher.....	....

NEW HAMPSHIRE.

Colonel Samuel Webber.....	Manchester.
Albina H. Powers.....	Grantham.
Luther H. Hayes.....	Milton.

NEW YORK.

Horatio Seymour	Utica.
Robert R. Roosevelt	New York City.
Edward M. Smitts	Rochester.

NEW JERSEY.

B. P. Howell	Woodbury.
J. R. Shortwell	Rahway.
G. A. Anderson	Trenton.
George Ricardo	Hackensack.

OHIO.

John C. Fisher	Coshocton.
John H. Klipput	Columbus.
Robert Cummings	Toledo.

PENNSYLVANIA.

J. H. Reeder	Easton.
B. L. Hewett	Hollidaysburg.
James Duffy	Marietta.

RHODE ISLAND.

Newton Dexter	Providence.
Alfred A. Reed, Jr.	Providence.
John H. Barden	Scituate.

UTAH TERRITORY.

A. P. Rockwood	Salt Lake City.

(Superintendent of Fisheries, Zion's Co-operative Society.)

VERMONT.

M. C. Edmunds	Weston.
M. Goldsmith	Rutland.

VIRGINIA.

A. Moseley	Richmond.
W. B. Robertson	Lynchburg.
M. G. Ellyzer	Blacksburg.

WISCONSIN.

William Welch	Madison.
A. Palmer	Bescobel.
P. R. Hoy	Racine

DOMINION OF CANADA.

W. F. Whitcher	Ottawa.
W. H. Vining	St. John, N. B.

(Inspector of fisheries for New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.)

ALFRED. A. REED, Jr.,
NEWTON DEXTER,
JOHN H. BARDEN.

State of Rhode Island in count with Commissioners on Inland Fisheries.

DR.

1877.				
Jan. 1st.	To amount paid for labor	$225 75		
	" " watching Moswansicut Pond, Pawtuxet Cove and River	55 00		
	" " expenses to Holyoke for shad	14 10		
	" " 105 black bass	3 00		
	" " express on salmon eggs	34 63		
	" " expenses of J. H. Barden, Commissioner to Centennial Fish Meeting	45 18		
	" " rent of land	13 00		
	" " stationery, etc.	5 50		
	" " traveling expenses	14 15		
	" " placing land-locked salmon in following ponds, viz.: Moswansicut, Johnson, Beach, Wickaboxet, Millville, Rockville, Spring Grove, Tucker, Wells, Jackson, Harrisville Natick, Pontiac, Warwick, Hope, Arctic, Washington, Quidnick, Crompton, River Point, Mashapaug and Lilly and Centreville; Slatersville River, Pawcatuck River, and six different places on Hood's River	61 50		
		$471 81		
	Balance carried forward	488 30		
			$960 11	

CR.

1877.			
Feb. 29th.	By balance on hand	$460 11	
	By amount of appropriation for the year 1876	500 00	
			$960 11
1877.			
Jan. 1st.	By balance cash on hand brought forward	$488 30	

PROVIDENCE *January* 1st, 1877.

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